The Government does not propose to set up a seromonitoring project to guard against the menace. However, sero-surveillance is in progress in all the states of the country, including Orissa. The samples are being taken randomly from the birds and are being sent to High Security Animal Disease Laboratory, Bhopal. Besides the samples from Navapur, Maharshtra and Uchchal, Gujarat, none of the samples have been tested positive for Avian Influenza.

Falling Female Sex-Ratio

1258. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the female sex-ratio is falling drastically in the recent years;

(b) if so, the reasons for such a decline;

(c) what will be the implications if such falls is left unchecked; and

(d) the measures envisaged to check the fall of female children?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS): (a) Sex ratio in India has declined over the century from 972 in 1901 to 927 in 1991. The sex ratio has since gone up to 933 in 2001. In contrast the child sex ratio for the age group of 0-6 years in 2001 in 927 girls per thousand boys against 945 recorded in 1991 Census.

(b) Some of the reasons commonly put forward to explain the consistently low levels of sex ratio are son preference, low value of girl child, neglect of girl child resulting in higher mortality at younger age, female infanticide, female foeticide, higher childhood mortality and male bias in enumeration of population.

(c) Imbalance in the sex-ratio may lead to further decline in the status of women, increase in violence against women practices of polyandry etc.

(d) Ministry of Health & Family Welfare has undertaken training of trainers from State Judicial Academies to train lower judiciary with the objective to sensitize the judiciary on the issue. National Inspection and Monitoring Committee (NIMC) having representatives of Department of Women & Child Development, National Commission for Women, Indian

Council for Medical Research as members, undertakes periodical visits to the districts with low child sex ratio (0-6 years) to oversee the implementation of the Act at ground level and monitors the prosecutions launched against unregistered bodies and bodies violating provisions of the Act/Rules and directions of the Supreme Court of India in the matter. The National Support and Monitoring Cell is being constituted as a mechanism to help Appropriate Authorities in apprehending the wrong doer who are committing female foeticide/abetting female foeticide.

It is, however, recognized that mere legislation is not enough to deal with this problem that has roots in social behavior and prejudices. A number of activities to create awareness on the issue are being undertaken. The initiatives include meeting with the organizations working against sex selection, involvement of the medical professionals, religious leaders to spread the message, requesting police training academies and schools to include the issues in curriculum of their training, telecasting of video spots on private satellite channels and Doordarshan, and involvement of elected representatives etc. A 'Save the Girl Child' Campaign with a view to lessen son preference by highlighting achievements of young girls has been launched. District Magistrates have also been requested to regularly review the implementation of the Pre-conception and Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques Act along with other health programmes in their district.

Upgradation of Thiruvananthapuram Medical College

1259. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal for the upgradation of the medical college hospital at Thiruvananthapuram to the level of All India Institute of Medical Sciences, has been received from the Government of Kerala;

(b) whether Government have taken any decision on the above proposal; and

(c) whether Government would consider to accord sanction from the above proposal and the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS): (a) to (c) This Ministry has received a proposal from Government of Kerala for upgradation of Government